

and Pensions Committee is one of the more controversial committees of the Senate. If I didn't have some credibility of following through on the things I have talked about in the process, that would not have gotten out of committee unanimously, had that not had the same kind of confidence on what I would do if a conference committee were appointed. And we talked about what kind of differences there are. The House had already passed their bill. If they didn't have some confidence in me that what I had said would happen would happen, it would not have gotten through the Senate floor unanimously. That doesn't happen often with Health, Education, Labor, and Pension bills.

This has been a very important bill for the workforce of America, and we had great agreement and cooperative work on it, recognizing what would probably be done in conference committee. Now, we could probably send this over four or five times to the House—which there is not time to do—and resolve some of the differences in each of those. Had I known this was going to happen, I would have started that process much earlier so we would have had time to send an important bill like this back and forth.

The way this has always been done with the Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee bill—that is the committee I have been on ever since I got here—is that we held conferences. Yes, some of them had a lot of animosity, but we worked them out and got bills finished. When you have difficult issues, the best thing is for people to sit down with each other. I have always invited the other side to any conference committee I have been on, and we have listened to both sides. What we have usually come up with, instead of one side or the other, was a third way. That is what ought to be done on this bill.

We ought to be reaching an agreement so we can get 900,000 people a year trained to fill the skills gap we were talking about before. We are not just going to have a lack of jobs, we are going to have more jobs than we can fill—provided we have people trained to fill them. If we don't train the people, those jobs are going overseas and we will never see them again. It has been critical for this year, the year that is just about over. We cannot afford to do this again next year and wait a year or 2 years to reach an agreement to get people trained for jobs. That is what is happening.

If we have to go until the first of the year, all these bills start all over again. Everybody's ideas come back in again, we redraft and start again, and we get to conference—maybe. But there is no assurance of that. We are at the point where we can have a conference committee. If we have a conference committee, then there can be agreement or disagreement. If there is disagreement, there is an opportunity to filibuster at that point. Senators

who cannot filibuster a bill through the rest of the session, as short as it is going to be now, probably ought to be worried about their senatorial capability.

Our workers and our companies deserve more than election year political obstruction. They deserve the tools needed to keep American workers and businesses the best in the world. They deserve to see us act in a bipartisan manner and send this bill to conference.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Does the Senator yield the remaining time on the Republican side?

Mr. ENZI. Yes.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, morning business is now closed.

RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will stand in recess until the hour of 2:15 p.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 12:53 p.m., recessed until 2:15 p.m., and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. VOINOVICH).

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Mexico.

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that we proceed as in morning business for the following two items: That Senator DORGAN be permitted to proceed after the Senator from New Mexico for 5 minutes to speak as in morning business, and the Senator from New Mexico be recognized for 7 minutes to speak as in morning business, and that those are the only two speakers to be permitted as in morning business at this point, and that is for debate only.

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I also seek the same 7 minutes.

Mr. DOMENICI. With the same conditions.

Mr. DORGAN. Yes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. DOMENICI. So we have 7 minutes each, speeches only as in morning business, and that is all we have agreed to at this point.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator is correct.

The Senator from New Mexico is recognized.

Mr. DOMENICI. I thank the Chair.

(The remarks of Mr. DOMENICI pertaining to the introduction of S. 2818 are printed in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nevada.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, beyond the statement of my friend from New Mexico and Senator DORGAN, is there any other time that has been allocated?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. No, there is not.

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that I be allowed to speak for 3 minutes to respond to my friend from New Mexico. Also, Senator NELSON is in the Chamber, and if there is a Republican who wants to speak—we are as in morning business, are we not?

Mr. DOMENICI. We are, but I cannot do that because we carved this out without our leadership. The Senator on his side is indicating he did not want us to do that, but he agreed to our two. We will soon agree with him, but at this point I cannot. Senator DORGAN is entitled to speak next, and I will inquire about Senator REID's and Senator NELSON's requests very shortly.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

UGLINESS OF AMERICAN POLITICS

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, first, I am proud to be in the Senate. I have always been proud to be a part of our political system. It is a remarkable privilege to participate in this system of ours. I have run for Statewide election 11 times, since I was in my midtwenties. I must say there are times when I see and hear things in American politics that fill me with disgust.

Two years ago, we had a colleague, Max Cleland, who sat in that desk near the door. Max Cleland was charged in his campaign with lack of commitment to our country's national security. They ran an ad against Max Cleland that had an image of Osama bin Laden and Saddam Hussein. This is a man who left three limbs on the battlefield. He sat in this Chamber missing two legs and an arm. Back home on television, he was accused of not standing up for this country's national security. It stretches my threshold of forgiveness to excuse those who do that to someone like Max Cleland, who went to Vietnam, came back, and wrote a book entitled "Strong at the Broken Places." He ran for the Senate to become a U.S. Senator, only to be attacked that he was not somehow standing up for the national security interests of this country. Shame on them.

This Sunday, I saw that ugliness again raise its head. It is the worst of American politics, in my judgment. This is a newspaper called the Rapid City Journal. I have it because this comes from a neighboring State of